

S/N 09/700,940



PATENT

Remarks

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on February 26, 2003. Claims 1-4 remain pending. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Uchida, U.S. Patent No. 6,430,735, in view of Zhu, U.S. Patent No. 6,446,016. This rejection is respectfully traversed, and the correctness of the rejection is not conceded.

However, the present application claims priority to Japanese Application No. 11-079927, filed on March 24, 1999. A verified translation of Japanese Application No. 11-079927 is included herewith to perfect the priority date of the present application.

Zhu has an effective prior art date under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as of its filing date of December 8, 1999.

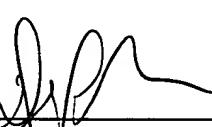
It is respectfully suggested that Zhu is not a proper reference under section 103(a) because the perfected priority date of the present application (March 24, 1999) predates the effective prior art date of Zhu (December 8, 1999). Therefore, for at least this reason, claims 1-4 are allowable. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration of claims 1-4 in the form of a Notice of Allowance is requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (612) 371-5237 with any questions regarding this application.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: May 15, 2003



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